

Intownwriter's Blog

Living Intown in the ATL

Today (9/3) I received an email from Mr. Emmet Bondurant, Joe Patton's attorney (for background on this story, go to [Save the Fox's Savior, Part One](#) and [Just the Facts, Ma'am: All the Documents You Need](#)). He wrote:

*On Tuesday, the spokesman of the Fox Theater stated publicly that the Fox intended to give Joe Patton notice that he will have **180 days** before being required by the Fox to vacate the apartment which has been his home for more than 30 years.*

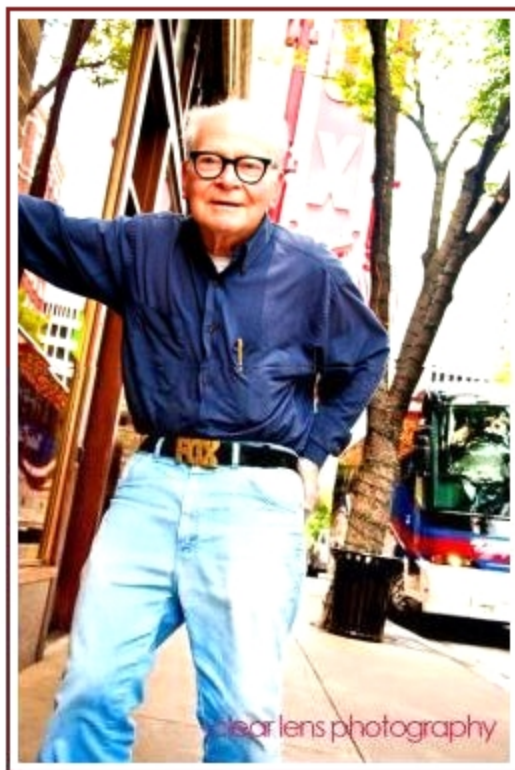
The Fox has now issued a formal notice of termination that contradicts directly the Fox's statements to the media at Tuesday's press conference.

(Below) is a formal notice of termination from Woody White, president of the Fox Theatre Board of Trustees addressed to Joe Patten dated September 2, 2010, of the decision of the board to terminate his lease and instructing Mr. Patton that:

"The 1979 lease will therefore terminate on the 90th calendar day— not the 180th day as publicly stated by the Fox spokespersons at Tuesday's press conference.—"from the date of this letter."

It makes one wonder whether the left hand at the Fox knows what the right hand is doing (or saying), and what statements by representatives of the Fox can be relied on as true, and what statements are intended only for public consumption and cannot be relied on by the public or by Mr. Patton.

First, seems like thousands of people have been wondering if the left hand at the Fox knew what the right hand was doing/saying. The story of this mess – especially the Fox's messaging – should be a case study on every crisis management mistake that can be made. Public relations/marketing/communications students could learn from these missteps (blunders?) for years to come. Honestly, when I read that the Fox was saying that Joe's advisors – Mr. Bondurant, I assume – were circulating a "blatant lie intended to smear the Fox," I almost did a jig! It was just the perfect phrase for Joe's supporters, and we picked it up and ran with it! See, we had the actual "occupancy agreement" that prohibited any visits without prior approval from the board of people who are some of Joe's oldest friends, former or current Fox Theatre employees and their immediate families.



Second, in my experience with this debacle, all of the statements from the Fox Theatre are, as Mr. Bondurant points out, intended only for public consumption and cannot be relied on by the public or by Mr. Patton.



Exhibit #1: Check out what Fox General Manager Allan Vella told the [AJC](#) on September 2. Clearly intended only for public consumption and cannot be relied on by the public or by Mr. Patton.

Exhibit #2: Now read what the Fox was actually telling Joe: [JP Letter 9-2-2010](#) Now *this* is the real deal, folks. *This* is the kind of message – put in writing as an official notice – that Joe, his family and Mr. Bondurant have been hearing since day one!

Yup, I guess it's just another heavy-handed misstep by Atlanta Landmarks President Edward "Woody" White. Made so much worse because it was on the same day Fox General Manager Allan Vella (left) said that Woody's original letter had been kind of a misstep and it's not really the pressing issue that I think [the letter] appears to indicate..."

Allan, check with Woody. He and the board seem committed to Joe's speedy assent to a new arrangement. *Joe has until September 15 for the new agreement to be in place.* Now that I think about it, I'd say that's more of a blunder than a misstep.

For Kristi Swartz's [AJC](#) article, go here: [AJC "Misstep" Article](#) and my initial, albeit naively hopeful, assessment here: [A Glimmer of Hope for the Savior of the Fox](#). What a difference reality makes!